

September 13, 2005

Dear Secretary Mike Johanns:

What a job you have been chosen to carry out. Secretary of Agriculture...Glad you come from a Dairy Farm and know what farming is about and you know that it is a business that needs a bottom line to pay the bills and support the family too.

At the Kansas State fair you said that INCREASING FEDERAL DEFICITS WITH OUR government, the budget is tight.

What about the TAX BREAKS the President has given to the wealthy??? Just how much money do they need to be happy????

What about the TAX BREAKS the President has given to the OIL and GAS INDUSTRY???? Heard where the oil companies had made 40 billion dollars just the first quarter...Seems like they should be doing fine.

This President has signed a bill to subsidy PHARMACEUTICAL DRUG COMPANIES...but, he has not put a cap on PRESCRIPTION DRUGS...He found money in the budget to make them happy....

This President wants to REPEAL the Estate Tax. This will certainly protect the WEALTHY AND POWERFUL....I heard a man talking on C-Span this week and he said he did not want to have Estate Tax repealed..he and wife worth over 1 1/2 million dollars...they don't need this money and they don't want it... A man talked of he and wife having an income of \$700 to \$800 thousand dollars per year and they don't need a TAX BREAK. They don't want it...

The FARM SUBSIDY FORMULA I think needs to be changed...Corporations with three or four members should not be getting the same sum per individual off the same piece of land...ONE SUM AND THEY CAN DIVIDE IT AMONGST THE CORPORATION MEMBERS.....ONE LANDLORD AND ONE TENANT...AND, SHUT OFF THIS DOUBLE CROPPING.....COMPOUNDS OUR SURPLUS..AND THEY CAN COLLECT DISASTER PAYMENTS IF CROP DOES NOT MATURE TO HARVEST.

Have you ever looked at the list of recipients of Subsidy checks???? Big Corporations with diverse businesses:as: CHEVRON, JOHN HANCOCK LIFE INSURANCE..CATERPILLAR...CARGILL (a Fortune 500) member.... Sam Donaldson ABC news caster...David Rockefeller...Ted Turner...Sunkist...THEIR PRIORITY INCOME DOES NOT COME OFF THE FARM...IT'S a diversification and sometimes a hobby.....

Congress voted in CAFTA....NAFTA....supposed to mean more agriculture exports....Times back when agriculture products were our balance of trade...today we have a HUGE TRADE INBALANCE.....

Middle Class farmers are trying to hang on..I can't imagine the ACCOUNT RECEIVABLE ACCOUNTS...at this moment for Fertilizer and fuel...About time to plant wheat..and fall harvest going onPrice of fuel eating away at their bottom line.

FOOD, FUEL AND FIBER used to be the basis of our economy at one time. TODAY'S GOVERNMENT DIVIDED BETWEEN THE POWERFUL AND POWERLESS.... PRODUCERS OF AGRICULTURE ARE THE POWERLESS....A shame....

Looking to you to do something responsible with 2007 farm bill...

Thank You - Melvin Miller - Kansas



(Common Sense Obituary)

To day we mourn the passing of an old friend,

- > Common Sense. Common Sense lived a long life
- > but died in the United States from heart failure
- > early in the new millennium.
- > No one really knows how old he was, since his
- > birth records were lost long ago in bureaucratic red
- > tape. He selflessly devoted his life to service in schools,
- > hospitals, homes, and factories, helping folks get jobs
- > done without fanfare and foolishness.
- >
- > For decades, petty rules, silly laws, and frivolous
- > lawsuits held no power over Common Sense. He was
- > credited with cultivating such valued lessons as to
- > know when to come in out of the rain, why the early
- > bird gets the worm, and that life isn't always fair.
- > Common Sense lived by simple, sound financial
- > policies (don't spend more than you earn), reliable
- > parenting strategies (the adults are in charge, not the
- > kids), and it's okay to come in second. A veteran of the
- > Industrial Revolution, the Great Depression, and the
- > Technological Revolution, Common Sense survived
- > cultural and educational trends including body piercing,
- > whole language, and new math. But his health declined
- > when he became infected with the If-it-only-helps-one
- > person-it's-worth-it virus.
- >
- > In recent decades, his waning strength proved no
- > match for the ravages of well intentioned but overbearing
- > regulations. He watched in pain as good people became
- > ruled by self-seeking lawyers. His health rapidly
- > deteriorated when schools endlessly implemented zero
- > tolerance policies.
- > Reports of a six-year-old boy charged with sexual
- > harassment for kissing a classmate, a teen suspended
- > for taking a swig of mouthwash after lunch, and a
- > teacher fired for reprimanding an unruly student only
- > worsened his condition. It declined even further when
- > schools had to get parental consent to administer
- > aspirin to a student but could not inform the parent
- > when a female student was pregnant or wanted an
- > abortion.
- >
- > Common Sense lost his will to live as the Ten
- > Commandments became contraband, churches became
- > businesses, criminals received better treatment than
- > victims, and federal judges stuck their noses in everything
- > from the Pledge of Allegiance to professional sports.
- > When an individual, too stupid to realize that a steaming
- > cup of coffee was hot, was awarded a huge settlement,
- > Common Sense threw in the towel. As the end neared,
- > Common Sense drifted in and out of logic but was kept
- > informed of developments regarding questionable
- > regulations such as those for low flow toilets, rocking
- > chairs, step ladders and auto emissions.
- >
- > Common Sense finally succumbed when,
- > while the United States was fighting a war on terrorism,
- > a federal judge declared the Pledge of Allegiance to
- > be unconstitutional.
- >
- > Common Sense was preceded in death by his
- > parents, Truth and Trust; his wife, Discretion; his
- > daughter, Responsibility; and his son, Reason. He
- > is survived by two step-siblings: My Rights, and Ima
- > Whiner.
- >

THE HUTCHINSON NEWS

Tuesday • September 13, 2005

50¢

Farmers voice concerns

Ag Secretary Johanns plans to submit his own draft of farm bill

By Amy Bickel

The Hutchinson News
abickel@hutchnews.com

Justin Lupfer wants to farm and ranch someday - but it's getting more difficult for kids to come back into farming and ranching, he told Secretary of Agriculture Mike Johanns on Monday.

His father, Bob, works part time as a teacher at Hanston High School to help supplement the farm income. His mother also has a job.

And Hanston - inside in the western Kansas county of Hodgeman, will lose its school next year - a victim of a declining rural economy.

"I'm just a kid, you know, and I might not know a whole lot, but I know the world can not live without agriculture," Lupfer said during the Johanns' farm bill listening tour at the Kansas State Fair.

The high school senior was one of several who gave Johanns a careful during the forum Monday on what farmers think should be included in the next farm bill. Congress will begin writing the 2007 farm bill next year, and Johanns said he plans

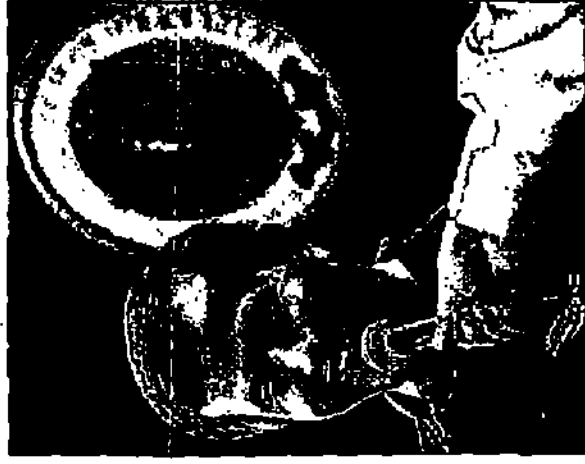
to submit his own draft to legislators.

But the agriculture secretary who hails from Nebraska warned farmers that the budget situation was tight in Washington - especially with an increasing federal deficit.

"The fact remains we have to deal with the federal deficit," he told farmers at the end of the three-hour forum. "It's not good for agriculture, it's not good for farmers and ranchers."

Energy costs were the No. 1 issue for many who testified that morning.

Kansas Farm Bureau President Steve Baucus said another ammonia had risen from \$200 a ton a few months ago to more than \$500 a ton.



U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Mike Johanns laughs after a lighthearted question from senator Kerry Lutz, not shown, during the farm bill forum Monday at the Kansas State Fair.

• See FORUM / A2

Forum

Continued from Page A1

even when the last farm bill was being discussed.

"The Congress has become even more urban," he said. "There is a lot less interest in farmers."

Opening more markets is one way to economic relief, Johanns said. Currently, 95 percent of the world's population lives outside the United States, but only about a third of U.S. commodities reach the global marketplace.

"We already produce more than we consume," Johanns said of the domestic market.

In addition, some farmers said they wanted a farm bill with more payments to farmers who conserve the land, a cap on the amount farmers receive for subsidies and provide more money for research, including Kansas' wheat program.

Jim Ramirez, former Arkansas

City mayor, said the USDA Rural Development helped transform a "prehistoric dinosaur" of a building in town to a "really nice" one - asking that similar programs that help rural communities not be cut from farm bill spending.

Young farmers were one of the top focuses.

"I will know we have succeeded in developing farm policy, trade policy and developing competition from who farmers buy from and who farmers sell to once I see the results that are this," Moran said. "When sons and daughters are returning home to the Kansas farm, then we'll know we've done something right."

Kansas Agriculture Secretary Adrian Polansky's 28-year-old son is trying to make a living on the family Republic County farm. Polansky said the new farm bill should provide a tax benefit to farmers to sell their operations

young farmers and enhance USDA's beginning farmer finance program.

Polansky said he didn't agree with some farmers' comments that the farm bill safety net discouraged young people from entering farming, saying a decrease in the safety net would result in lower farm income and lower farmland values.

Barton County farmer Keith Miller said his nephew started farming with him two months ago. He wants to be a farmer.

Miller asked him why because there isn't any profit on the farm, and the only profit Miller has pocketed comes from government payments.

His nephew, however, is optimistic.

"He says he wants the way of life," Miller said. "I hope this new farm bill will put some profit back into our operations."

Ms. Mildred Miller
118 S Douglas Ave.
Lyons, KS 67554-2625

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE
SECRETARIAT, USDA

2005 SEP 28 P 3 42

COPIES:



Secretary of Agriculture Mike Johanns
1400 Independence Ave SW
Washington, C.D. 20250



U.S. OFFICIAL MAIL

U.S. POSTAGE

0.00



OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE
SECRETARIAL, USDA

2005 SEP 26 P 3 35

COPIES: _____